

Statement of Congressman Ron Kind
Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users
April 2, 2004

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of HR 3550, the Transportation Equity Act. I want to acknowledge the work of the Transportation Committee on this complex bill and especially thank my friend and colleague from Wisconsin, Mr. Petri, for his leadership on the legislation; the Wisconsin delegation is lucky to have such a strong advocate for our citizens.

We all know that transportation bills are job bills, and now is certainly the time that we need more jobs throughout the country. Over eight million Americans are looking for jobs, and last month only 21,000 new jobs were created, none of which was a private-sector job. I consistently hear from constituents who are searching for work; who have sent out dozens of resumes and updated their skills but remain unemployed. Each billion dollars spent on highway funding creates not only safer and better roads: it also creates an estimated 47,500 new jobs. An investment in highway funding is an investment for steady work for those in Wisconsin and around the nation.

Furthermore, I am pleased that the bill recognizes the importance of funding crucial highways, transit centers, and bridges in Wisconsin's Third Congressional District. Specifically, the inclusion of funding for the Stillwater Bridge, which connects Houlton, Wisconsin and Stillwater, Minnesota is great news for those of us who have been working on this project for years. The bridge is only one example of an important project that will provide the nation with safer roads, shorter commutes, and better jobs. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.